White Soda Bread – Use for St. Balise, St. Patrick’s and other Irish feast days

White Soda Bread

4 cups (16 oz) of all purpose flour.
1 Teaspoon baking soda
1 Teaspoon salt
14 oz of buttermilk

Method:

Preheat the oven to 425 F. degrees. Lightly crease and flour a cake pan.

In a large bowl sieve and combine all the dry ingredients.

Add the buttermilk to form a sticky dough. Place on floured surface and lightly knead (too much allows the gas to escape)

Shape into a round flat shape in a round cake pan and cut a cross in the top of the dough.

Cover the pan with another pan and bake for 30 minutes (this simulates the bastible pot). Remove cover and bake for an additional 15 minutes.

The bottom of the bread will have a hollow sound when tapped so show it is done.

Cover the bread in a tea towel and lightly sprinkle water on the cloth to keep the bread moist.

No-Knead Crusty Dutch Oven Bread (Mother Earth News)

No-Knead Dutch Oven Bread

1/4 tsp active dry yeast
1 1/2 cups warm water
3 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for dusting. You may use white, whole wheat or a combination of the two.
1 1/2 tsp salt
Cornmeal or wheat bran for dusting

In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Add the flour and salt, stirring until blended. The dough will be shaggy and sticky. Cover bowl with plastic wrap. Let the dough rest at least 8 hours, preferably 12 to 18, at warm room temperature, about 70 degrees.
The dough is ready when its surface is dotted with bubbles. Lightly flour a work surface and place dough on it. Sprinkle it with a little more flour and fold it over on itself once or twice. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and let it rest for about 15 minutes.
Using just enough flour to keep the dough from sticking to the work surface or to your fingers, gently shape it into a ball. Generously coat a clean dish towel with flour, wheat bran or cornmeal. Put the seam side of the dough down on the towel and dust with more flour, bran or cornmeal. Cover with another towel and let rise for about 1 to 2 hours. When it’s ready, the dough will have doubled in size and will not readily spring back when poked with a finger.
At least 20 minutes before the dough is ready, heat oven to 475 degrees. Put a 6- to 8-quart heavy covered pot (cast iron, enamel, Pyrex or ceramic) in the oven as it heats. When the dough is ready, carefully remove the pot from the oven and lift off the lid. Slide your hand under the towel and turn the dough over into the pot, seam side up. The dough will lose its

shape a bit in the process, but that’s OK. Give the pan a firm shake or two to help distribute the dough evenly, but don’t worry if it’s not perfect; it will straighten out as it bakes. Cover and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the lid and bake another 15 to 20 minutes, until the loaf is beautifully browned. Remove the bread from the Dutch oven and let it cool on a rack for at least 1 hour before slicing.

Amish Potato Salad from Cook’s Country

3 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into 3/4-inch chunks
Salt and pepper
1/3 cup cider vinegar (see note)
1/4 cup sugar
2 tablespoons yellow mustard
4 large hard-cooked eggs, peeled
1/2 teaspoon celery seed (see note)
3/4 cup sour cream
1 celery rib, chopped fine

Instructions

1. COOK POTATOES Bring potatoes, 1 tablespoon salt, and enough water to cover by 1 inch to boil in large pot over high heat. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until potatoes are just tender, about 10 minutes.

2. PREPARE DRESSING While potatoes simmer, microwave vinegar and sugar in small bowl until sugar dissolves, about 30 seconds. Process vinegar mixture, mustard, 1 hard-cooked egg yolk (reserve white), celery seed, and ½ teaspoon salt in food

processor until smooth. Transfer to medium bowl.

3. SEASON POTATOES Drain potatoes thoroughly, then transfer to large bowl. Drizzle 2 tablespoons dressing over hot potatoes and, using rubber spatula, gently toss until evenly coated. Refrigerate until cooled, at least 30 minutes, stirring gently once to redistribute dressing.

4. ASSEMBLE Whisk sour cream into remaining dressing. Add remaining hard-cooked eggs and egg white to dressing and, using potato masher, mash until only small pieces remain. Add dressing and celery to cooled potatoes. Cover and refrigerate until chilled, about 30 -minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve. (Salad can be refrigerated in airtight container for 2 days.)

I love Cook’s Illustrated, the shows on PBS etc, but they sure make it a pain in the neck to get their recipes. Ridiculous!

Honey Fried Chicken from Cook’s Country

BRINE
1/2 cup salt
1/2 cup sugar
3 pounds bone-in chicken pieces (split breasts cut in half, drumsticks, and/or thighs), trimmed
BATTER
1 1/2 cups cornstarch
3/4 cup cold water
2 teaspoons pepper
1 teaspoon salt
3 quarts peanut or vegetable oil

HONEY GLAZE
3/4 cup honey
2 tablespoons hot sauce

Instructions

1. FOR THE BRINE: Dissolve salt and sugar in 2 quarts cold water in large container. Add chicken, cover, and refrigerate for 30 minutes or up to 1 hour.

2. FOR THE BATTER: Whisk 1 cup cornstarch, water, pepper, and salt together in bowl until smooth. Refrigerate batter while chicken is brining.

3. Set wire rack inside rimmed baking sheet. Sift remaining ½ cup cornstarch into medium bowl. Remove chicken from brine and dry thoroughly with paper towels. Working with 1 piece at a time, coat chicken thoroughly with cornstarch, shaking to remove excess; transfer to platter.

4. Add oil to large Dutch oven until it measures about 2 inches deep and heat over medium-high heat to 350 degrees. Whisk batter to recombine. Transfer half of chicken to batter and turn to coat. Remove chicken from batter, allowing excess to drip back into bowl, and add chicken to hot oil. Adjust burner, if necessary, to maintain oil temperature between 325 and 350 degrees. Fry chicken, stirring to prevent pieces from sticking together, until slightly golden and just beginning to crisp, 5 to 7 minutes. (Chicken will not be cooked through at this point.) Transfer parcooked chicken to platter. Return oil to 350 degrees and repeat with remaining raw chicken and batter. Let each batch of chicken rest for 5 to 7 minutes.

5. Return oil to 350 degrees. Return first batch of chicken to oil and fry until breasts register 160 degrees and thighs/drumsticks register 175 degrees, 5 to 7 minutes. Transfer to wire rack. Return oil to 350 degrees and repeat with remaining chicken.

6. FOR THE HONEY GLAZE: Combine honey and hot sauce in large bowl and microwave until hot, about 1½ minutes. Add chicken pieces one at a time to honey mixture and turn to coat; return to wire rack, skin side up, to drain. Serve.

Mexican Shepherd’s Pie

Ingredients:
1 1/2 pounds ground beef
1 onion, finely chopped
garlic powder to taste
salt and pepper to taste
1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes
1 (1.25 ounce) package taco seasoning mix

3/4 cup hot water
1 (11 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
1 (8.5 ounce) package corn muffin mix
1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese (optional)
1 (2.25 ounce) can sliced black olives (optional)
Directions:
1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F (200 degrees C). Spray a 9×13 inch baking dish with cooking spray.
2. Place the beef and onion in a skillet over medium heat. Cook until beef is evenly brown and onion is tender. Drain grease. Season with garlic powder, salt, and pepper. Mix in the tomatoes, and cook 5 minutes. Stir in the taco seasoning and water. Bring to a boil, reduce heat to low, and continue cooking 5 minutes, until thickened. Transfer to the prepared

baking dish, and top evenly with corn.
3. Prepare the corn muffin mix according to package directions. Spread evenly over the corn layer in the baking dish.
4. Bake 20 minutes in the preheated oven, or until puffed and golden. Garnish with olives and cheese.

Weekly Menu #8

Sunday: cornish game hens, potato gnocchi w/ peas & bacon

Monday: Enchiladas

Tuesday: Spicy maple chicken legs, au gratin potato, zucchini cakes

Wednesday: Pat & Hank’s for dinner

Thursday: Mac n’ cheese, ham steaks, broccoli

Friday: Spaghetti & Italian sausage

Traditional Welsh Cawl (In honor of St. David of Wales Feast Day)

Cawl is the national dish of Wales. Welsh Cawl is a stew and made from bacon, Welsh lamb or beef, cabbage and leeks.Though more traditionally cheaper cuts of lamb are used, be warned

Welsh recipes for Cawl vary from region to region and sometimes even season to season.There is no hard and fast rule.

Cawl can be eaten in one bowl, though often the broth will be served first followed by the meat and vegetables.

The flavors in Welsh Cawl do improve for keeping for a day or two, so don’t be afraid to make it in advance or save any leftovers for reheating

Ingredients

1 tbsp lard or bacon fat
2 large onions, thickly sliced
1 medium swede, peeled and cut into 1″/2.5 cm cubes
4 large carrots, peeled thickly sliced.
4 leeks, cleaned and sliced
1 lb/ 450g potatoes, peeled and quartered
1 lb/450g brisket of beef
1 lb/ 450g piece of smoked bacon, cut in to 1”/2.5 cm cubes
1 bay leaf
Sprig fresh thyme
Salt and freshly ground pepper.
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Prep Time: 30 minutes
Cook Time: 150 minutes

Total Time: 180 minutes
Yield: Serves 4

Preparation

Melt the lard in a large stock pan over a high heat, take care

not to burn the fat. Add all the vegetables except the potatoes, to the hot fat and brown for about 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove the vegetables with a slotted spoon and keep to one side.
Raise the heat and add the beef to the pan and brown on all sides. Return the browned vegetables to the pan with the bacon pieces and herbs.

Cover the meat and vegetables with cold water, bring to the boil, then lower the heat to keep the water simmering and cook for 2 hours, or until the beef is tender.
Lift the beef from the pan and keep to one side. Add the potatoes and bring back to the boil and cook for another 20 mins, or until the potatoes are cooked. Meanwhile, once the beef is cool enough to handle, cut into 2″/5cm cubes. Once the potatoes are cooked, add the beef back to the pot and cook for a further 10 minutes.
Season well with salt and pepper and serve while piping hot. The broth from the pot can be served first as a soup, followed by the meat and vegetables, the choice is yours.

The flavors in Welsh Cawl do improve for keeping for a day or two, so don’t be afraid to make it in advance or save any leftovers for reheating.

Banana “Sushi” (from Family Fun April 2015)

Sliced banana, spread nut butter on outside, roll in chia seeds, coconut, crushed pretzels, or walnuts. Serve.

Sausage & Kale Soup

1 pound Hillshire Smoked Sausage, cut into 1/4-inch half-moon slices
3 medium Yukon Gold or red potatoes, chopped
2 medium onions, chopped
1 bunch kale, trimmed and chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 bay leaves
1 can (14-1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
1 can (15 ounces) garbanzo beans or chickpeas, rinsed and drained
1 carton (32 ounces) chicken broth (or more)

Toss is all in a soup pot, bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 20 minutes (until potatoes and onions are cooked through). Discard the bay leaves….or give a special dessert to the person who finds one in their bowl!

Original idea for the recipe (this one has been modified) was originally published as Sausage and Kale Soup in Country Extra September 2007, p51

Chicken & Mushrooms

(Variation on Mrs. Wenger’s Chicken)

4 skin-on chicken breasts

salt & pepper

olive oil

16 oz mushrooms, sliced thickly

3/4 cup chicken stock approx.

3T butter

1T corn starch

3 cloves, minced garlic

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.
2. Season chicken on all sides with salt and ground black pepper.
3. Heat olive oil over medium-high heat in an ovenproof skillet. Place chicken skin-side down in skillet and cook until browned, about 5 minutes.
4. Turn chicken over; stir mushrooms with a pinch of salt into skillet.
5. Transfer skillet to the preheated oven and cook until chicken is no longer pink in the center and the juices run clear, 15 to 20 minutes. An instant-read thermometer inserted into the center should read 165 degrees F. Transfer chicken breasts to a plate and loosely tent with foil; set aside.
6. Set skillet on the stovetop over medium-high heat; cook and stir mushrooms until brown bits start to form on the bottom of the pan, toss in minced garlic, about 5 minutes. Pour chicken stock into the skillet, and bring to a boil while scraping the browned bits off of the

bottom of the pan. Make a slurry of corn starch and chicken stock, pour into mixture. Stir. Add butter and stir until melted. Remove from heat. Set chicken and any accumulated juices into mushrooms gravy.

7. Season with salt and pepper. Serve over egg noodles.

NOTES: Think about serving over farro or other whole grain to make healthier.